

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A regular meeting of the Brown County Library Board was held on **January 20, 2022** at **5:15 p.m.** at the Brown County Central Library, 515 Pine Street, Green Bay, WI, 54301.

**PRESENT:** BRIAN ANDERSON, ANNETTE AUBINGER, DAVID RUNNING and JOHN VAN DYCK  
KATHY PLETCHER attended remotely.

**EXCUSED:** MARISSA MELI and JAYME SELLEN.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Sarah Sugden, Emily Rogers, Sue Lagerman, Linda Chosa, Curt Beyler, Al Hughes, Sandy Kallunki, Danielle Zeamer, Mary Jane Herber, and Jen Schmidt (staff). Supervisor Amanda Chu (Brown County Supervisor District 3). Matt Cotter and JoAnn Cotter (Cotter Funeral Home) and Tom Thibodeau (Alliance Construction & Design).

**1. CALL TO ORDER** President Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m.

### **2. APPROVE/MODIFY AGENDA AND MINUTES**

**Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to approve the agenda and the December 2021 minutes. **Motion carried.**

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS AND OPEN FORUM FOR PUBLIC**

Mary Jane Herber, the library's Local History Librarian, shared a rare plat map that was thought to be produced between 1910 and 1920. The map's legend had been cut off; creating a mystery of the year it was actually made. After reviewing the State Historical Society's map collection in their online catalog, record of the map could not be located. Herber will continue to work on its availability. She is also checking the holdings of the Library of Congress and the American Geographical Society Library at UW-Milwaukee. Eventually, the map will be restored, indexed, and searchable online. Herber thanked the Board for recognizing library staff with a one-time personnel payment at the end of last year.

#### **A. Presentation, Discussion, and Possible Action Regarding Wrightstown Branch Location**

JoAnn and Matt Cotter from Cotter Funeral Home and Tom Thibodeau from Alliance Construction & Design attended to present a conceptual idea that would create a partnership with the library by including the Wrightstown Branch in a new development they are establishing. Cotter has purchased land across from the high school and water tower. It is within walking distance from the public schools and the future St. John's new church and school. The Catholic Church also owns land nearby that will become the site for a consolidated church and school in the future. Predicted growth in the area will be astronomical and this location, in the long-term, will be fairly in the middle of the village.

Cotter wants to build more than a funeral home. They want to build a flexible gathering space (to accommodate up to 150 people) that could be utilized by the community for small weddings, bridal and baby showers, offsite corporate meetings, etc. This space would be configurable and offer hospitality amenities like a warming kitchen. Knowing that the library is interested in more space, and based on the layout of the land, an approximate 2000 square feet could be dedicated to the library with access to more. Fiber and power amenities already exist. An outdoor patio would be included. Certain parking spaces would be reserved for library patrons.

The Cotters want to understand the Board's thoughts and interest in this project. Anderson asked if he is to understand that this is an invitation to converse about a potential lease agreement. This is a private development by the Cotters and they are looking for long-term tenant. The library's current space is not favorable long-term and the lease expires in 2026. Van Dyck noted that the village has been keeping its eyes open for opportunities for the library. He feels this is premature as it relates to the projects plan the Board has established but the Board knows to investigate opportunities as they arise. This is similar to the projects in Denmark and Pulaski. He would like to continue this conversation and seriously consider this arrangement.

Pletcher thanked the Cotters and Thibodeau and appreciated the presentation. She likes the idea of a private partnership, thinks it is intriguing, and sounds innovative. Regarding a timeline for this project, JoAnn Cotter responded that they would not start anything (break ground) before 2023 and no later than spring 2024. Sugden thinks this is a very exciting, dynamic solution for the Wrightstown community. Capital project dollars would have to work into it. Van Dyck commented that County Administration did not see an issue with this. It is feasible if there is the ability to have separation.

**Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Pletcher to authorize staff to form a working group that will analyze and discuss potential partnerships in the Wrightstown area and aim towards developing a possible partnership. **Motion carried.**

### **B. Presentation by Al Hughes, Safety Officer**

Sugden introduced Al Hughes who started at the library as a Library Associate in the Circulation Department and moved into the Safety Officer position that was created two years ago. This position focuses on training development, facilitation, programming, and procedure writing. Hughes mentioned that she has been in this role since January 2020, but, as a member of the National Guard, has been called out to a couple missions that took her away from the library. Hughes reviewed the scope of her job description to develop and implement safety measures for staff as well as library-wide initiatives, and build and maintain community relationships.

Her priorities fall into the following categories: BCL Safety Manual; Emergency Preparedness; Behavior Violations, Enforcing Library Bans; and Continuity Documents. These overlap with addressing behavior, communication, County safety recommendations and anything that makes the library space safer. Partnerships include public safety and law enforcement, Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition, Homeless Outreach Team, St. John's Homeless Shelter, House of Hope and others. She works closely with the Facilities Manager, Curt Beyler, and other Library Administrators. Success of her job is dependent on those who she works with. The library's values provide the backbone to Hughes' accountability to the library and the community. Projects she is working to finalize include the Safety Manual and making training facilitation tools; continuing to cultivate community partnerships as to meet the needs of library users; and package what the library is doing right (evaluation and measurement). Lastly, Hughes wants to lay the groundwork to move from reactive to proactive so staff is well prepared going forward.

Running asked about the differentiation of city and county responses to emergency calls. This was addressed with all parties at one table and was understood by all. Anderson asked what the biggest challenges/issues are that should be addressed. Hughes wants to layout the structure so it becomes routine and cyclical. Aubinger asked about staff turnover and how new employees become acclimated to this information. Hughes, like all Administrative staff, meets with every new staff member. Running asked if theft is a major issue and Hughes replied it is not a standout issue.

Anderson asked about physical safety of employees and if there is a concern or if it is managed. Hughes replied that staff feedback is important and she relies on it and responds to it through training. Staff at all locations feel safe talking about concerns when they exist. Staff needs to tell if they do feel unsafe. Parking is a safety issue. Sugden noted that over the last two years there has been increased concern over safety. Relationships with partners will continue to be transformative. Lessening concerns will take time but will continue to get better.

### **4. UPDATE ON LIBRARY OPERATIONS RELATED TO COVID-19**

Rogers noted that the library staff is still masking and recommending masking to the public. Staff is still planning programs and events. Furniture continues to be added. Current activities include updating training manuals and replenishing COVID-19 supplies. Running asked about staffing related to COVID. The most recent strain has resulted in staffing challenges.

### **5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING LEAVE POLICY**

The policy needed updating to remove irrelevant language and clarify what leave is paid and not paid out. **Motion** by Van Dyck, seconded by Running, to approve the updated Employee Leave Policy. **Motion carried.**

### **6. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE**

Beyler reported the following: Submittals are being received and approved, and materials ordered for Central projects.

Regarding the new East Branch, scoring of the RFPs for Architectural and Engineering (A&E) design was due today. County Purchasing will combine scores with cost formula and return to the library by Monday. Once received, reference checks and interviews of the top two or three can take place.

Referring to the Central lower level flexible meeting space, the purchase order for A&E service by HGA is complete; County Purchasing is completing the contract. A date for the kickoff meeting is being worked on. The contents of that space have been reviewed and designated as to being kept, recycled, or donated. Van Dyck is interested in getting to the point where timelines and meetings can be more transparent in their posting(s). Sugden noted the tremendous effort of the Local

History & Genealogy Department in moving the archives from that room. Running complimented Van Dyck for his efforts in working with the County Board.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIP WITH AGING & DISABILITY

**RESOURCE CENTER (ADRC)** Sugden prefaced that the library has been interested in partnering with an agency at the Central Library. The ADRC is interested in partnering with library to build a commercial central kitchen for their meals on wheels and congregate meals program – either at Central and/or in new library construction. Central does have some logistic issues. The library and the ADRC have shared and aligned missions and are interested in working collaboratively. Opportunity for ADRC to receive ARPA funds from the County Board. County Administration has invited departments to pitch ideas for funds. Van Dyck noted that there are many unknown details. The timeline is tight because allocations need to be finalized before turnover of County Board in April. Aubinger commented that there are so many expenses related to a central kitchen. Anderson replied that the library would not allocate any library funds toward this project. Are there opportunities that a partnership would provide? Running wants assurance that the County Board's needs at Central are priority (lower level flexible meeting space). He noted that parking is an issue and does not favor something that will create more of a parking and traffic issue. Van Dyck commented that there are many requests for funding from the \$20M of ARPA funds. The timeline is an issue and the Library Board is not in a place to make a commitment. The ADRC's main interest is a communal dining area and a commercial kitchen. The Library Board is not in a position to discuss big, strategic projects at this time but is still interested in maintaining programming partnerships. Pletcher is not sure this project fits in the library's mission and there are many other things going on. She encourages staying focused on library facilities and the naming rights initiative.

**Motion** Aubinger, seconded by Pletcher, to direct staff to inform the ADRC that the BC Library Board is not currently interested in pursuing a partnership regarding a co-location of a commercial kitchen. **Motion carried.**

**8. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON LIBRARY FINES AND FEES** Anderson had asked Chosa to do some research on removing overdue fines. Chosa drafted and distributed an outline and reviewed the research process involved in examining overdue fines. This work will take time – likely through May. She will present information to the Board as she discovers it. If a decision to make change is made by May, it could be included in 2023 budget. She shared a study from Syracuse University, articles from NPR and the WI State Journal, and a map of Wisconsin libraries that have removed overdue fees.

## 9. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF LIBRARY BUSINESS

### A. Financial Manager Update

**I. Financial, and Gifts, Grants, and Donation Reports** Year-end is not closed yet so there are not financials for December.

December 2021 donation report:

Brown County Library			
Gifts, Grants & Donations Report			
December 2021			
Gifts & Donations			
12/01/21	E. Ronk	\$ 25.00	Memorial M. Heraly-Schmidt
12/15/21	B. Hendrickson	2,500.00	General Needs
12/20/21	M. Jahn	100.00	General Needs
12/01/21	L. Norsetter	400.00	General Needs
12/08/21	Friends of Brown County Library	4,339.98	Supplies
12/15/21	R. Eason	500.00	Large Print Collection
12/15/21	Brown County Retired Educators Assoc.	25.00	Memorial M. Heraly-Schmidt
12/15/21	W. Schmidt	395.00	East Branch
12/15/21	Zaborski Family Trust	5,000.00	General Needs
12/29/21	A. Petruska	25.00	General Needs
12/29/21	L. & K. Anderson	1,000.00	Kress & General Needs
12/31/21	K. Wochinske	5,000.00	Teen Collection & Programming
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 19,309.98</b>	
Donation Box			
		Month	YTD
12/01/21	Ashwaubenon	\$ 96.85	\$ 465.10
12/01/21	Bookmobile	30.00	30.80
12/01/21	Central Children's	112.65	435.49
12/01/21	East	119.24	476.34
12/01/21	Denmark	-	-
12/01/21	Kress	44.88	291.76
12/01/21	Pulaski	-	-
12/01/21	Southwest	217.78	287.69
12/01/21	Weyers/Hilliard	43.59	247.73
12/01/21	Wrightstown	-	65.66
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 664.99</b>	<b>\$ 2,300.57</b>
Federal & State Grants			
12/5/2021	Nicolet Federated Library System	\$ 3,000.00	Continuing Education Grant
12/29/2021	Nicolet Federated Library System	\$ 6,562.50	Collection 4 of 4
12/29/2021	Nicolet Federated Library System	\$ 5,500.00	Resource Collection
12/31/2021	Nicolet Federated Library System	\$ 4,510.27	Ancestry
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 19,572.77</b>	

Chosa noted the longevity and generosity of certain volunteers. Van Dyck proposed sharing this information at the next Ed & Rec meeting. Pletcher cautioned about being sensitive in making this announcement. Anderson was asked to also acknowledge these donors.

**B. FACILITIES UPDATE** Update given in agenda item 6.

**C. PERSONNEL UPDATE** Rogers reported the following:

**Leaving:** Amandah Lee (Circulation Clerk) and Michelle Ebben (Southwest Library Associate) for personal, life-changing reasons.

**Successful Candidates:** Alicia Elsner (Ashwaubenon Clerk), and Talis Costea, Edith Vasquez, Maryssa Paulsen and Merry Xiong (Central Shelves).

**Open Searches:** Acquisitions Associate, Technical Services Manager interviews underway, and two Kress Clerks.

**Launching Soon:** Weyers-Hilliard and Circulation Clerks, Southwest Associate, and Shelves at Kress, Ashwaubenon, Weyers-Hilliard, and Central.

In total, nine positions are open.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS/PROGRAMMING UPDATE** Lagerman reported that the Winter Reading Challenge for kids begins on Monday and runs through February 28. Sample materials were included in the packet.

News coverage has been excellent in the past few weeks. Print stories ran in the City Pages (included in packet) Denmark News, and the Press Times (distributed). Television coverage included WBAY's interview with Mary Jane Herber about her upcoming Genealogy 101 series and WLUK Good Day WI's coverage of Genealogy 101 and Books for Packers fans.

Molly Schroeder, Marketing Specialist, is creating an impact report for the library. Somewhat similar to an annual report, this document will share stories, volunteer activity, new collections and resources, special activities, accomplishments and future plans.

In Friends of the Library news, Give-A-Kid-A-Book had just under 9700 books donated or purchased. There were about 260 individuals who cumulatively donated ~\$16,000 to the annual program. A spring book sale is planned for the first fullweek of March. The Friends are interested in adding members to their board. Please contact Lagerman with prospects.

The Friends' UntitledTown program has hosted two virtual author events since December and the next upcoming event is a meeting of their book club, PageTurners, in March.

**10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT** Anderson reported that election of officers would take place at the February meeting.

**11. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT** Sugden reported that the digitization project was a great experience and the library is looking forward to starting on it. It will take years! Pletcher thought the report was well done. The library received a grant for marketing from the Friends to bring more awareness of the library to the community.

Referring back to Hughes' presentation, libraries, particularly in the winter, are warming places and staff deal with patrons who are in need of social services. This is very stressful and it is taking a toll on library staff but Sugden is confident that partnerships will help provide solutions. It is tough to provide safe spaces. Central Library is the only space to go on the weekends – the Micah Center is closed. This is a community issue – not just the library's. Issues include drinking and drug use (law enforcement will do walk-throughs). Other partners are being engaged to address issues. All spaces and outlets are full. Van Dyck commented that this is hot issue in the entire county. No one wants to take charge. The library has to take a firm stand against behaviors and the community has to do more. Sandy Kallunki, Central Library manager, commented that it has been really tough. She has seen the impact of these issues grow – particularly at Central – and it has become a huge diversion of staff time and resources. Staff wants to serve but they want to serve the broader community. Efforts are skewed and that makes it hard to work on other services that they should be offering. Behavior issues are at the root of the problem and there is a higher incidence among those experiencing homelessness. What is typical on the weekend is that 30-35 people come in when the library opens and stay all day leaving no tables or seats open and no outlets available. There is no turnover – anyone else who wants to come has nowhere to go. Staff is concerned about the ability to serve families and

others. Other organizations and individuals may think it is fine but it is not. These issues are inhibiting staff's ability to function as a public library. What can the library do to motivate others to understand it is a community issue? Anderson said we should address this with deliberate speed. The optics are uncomfortable. Sugden discussed strategies to address this topic will include meeting with service providers and share our position; talk to visitors about behavior expectations and consequences for not meeting those expectations; talk to elected officials and other local agencies; and ask for help. The library is now active in the Housing and Homeless Coalition. Many libraries hire social workers as staff but BC Library will not do that because those positions exist elsewhere in the county. The library will create signage to articulate expectations. It will take a number of strategies to make a difference. Van Dyck thinks there will be varying opinions (public space and people have a right...) so it is up to the library to handle. Running asked about options and solutions. Sugden replied that not talking about it, is not helping. It is a hard issue but it is important to keep with identified strategies. It may take a long time to find the right strategy. The library had the Board's full support.

Sugden is attending Library Legislative Day to talk about the value of libraries and goals of communities.

**12. OTHER BUSINESS** Running mentioned that the Brown County Fair Board wondered about the new Bookmobile. The specs are finalized and RFPs will go out through Purchasing. A rough timeline will be prepared for the next Board meeting.

### **13. SUCH OTHER MATTERS AS ARE AUTHORIZED BY LAW**

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** by Pletcher, seconded by Aubinger, to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried.**  
The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**  
**February 17, 2022 | 5:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Lagerman | Recording Secretary